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With kind regards.

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THE CHURCH'S NATURAL ALLIES

BY

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REPRINTED FROM THE UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE, OCTOBER, 1910

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THE CHURCH'S NATURAL ALLIES

IT is right and proper, according to an old Latin proverb, to take a lesson from the enemy, and, while it is true of the Church to-day, as it has always been, that no weapon formed against her shall prosper, this must, humanly speaking, be due, in the future, as in the past, to her policy, using the word in its legitimate sense, of turning such weapons against her enemies. It has been her invariable and God-guided wisdom, that is to say, to employ whatever means might rightly tend towards ensuring her victory over her assailants, even when those means have been originally devised by her assailants themselves. Her whole history, from the Upper Room in Jerusalem to the present time, is one long record of her triumphs, even in apparent defeat and humiliation.

Again, her enemies, since the Day of Pentecost, have been of two kinds, open and secret; the "ravening wolves", spoken of by Saint Paul to the elders of Miletus and Ephesus, and the men from among her authorized rulers and teachers, "speaking perverse things", against whom he was no less careful to warn them. Concerning both something will be said in this article, since those whom I shall venture to refer to as the Church's natural allies are the same against open and secret enemies alike. And, if it be objected that, in the past, the Church has never looked for human allies but to her bitter cost, I answer that never have conditions, spiritual as well as temporal, been quite the same as they are to-day. Further, and as I shall hope to show, it is no mere human alliance that is here to be considered, but one in matters of vital import to Christianity only. Concerning this, moreover, I would suggest, that some foreshadowings of it, so to speak, are to be found in Holy Scripture. For if

it be true, as it is, that our Blessed Lord said, when the occasion arose, "he that is not with Me is against Me"; it is no less true that, on another occasion, He said of one who was casting out devils in His Name, and whom His disciples, in their zeal for His honour, forbade, "because he followeth not with us: Forbid him not, for he that is not against us is on our part." (S. Mark IX, 38, 39.)¹ Again, Saint Paul, the great champion of the Church's unity and authority, speaking of some who, he says, "preach Christ of contention", insincerely and without charity, does not hesitate to add: "Notwithstanding, every way, Christ is preached, and I therein rejoice." (Philippians I, 16, 18.) I shall hope to return to these foreshadowings, in due course; just now, I will ask only that the principle here indicated may be borne in mind as a possible justification of the alliance with which we are to concern ourselves.

Before, however, considering the possibility and the terms of any conceivable alliance between the Church of God and any other forces that may lawfully be called Christian, it may be well to give some attention to her enemies, open and secret. Of these, the open and avowed opponents, not of Catholicism only, but of all true Christianity, call for our first, and most immediate attention; for a study of their sources of strength and methods of attack; in order to ascertain, to the best of our ability, what lessons may be learned from them, and how they may be used.

If there is one fact more clearly shewn than all others, as the outcome of the Ferrer agitation, it is that the forces of socialism and anarchism, in the old world, and in the new, are fully aware of the strength to be derived from union, and from unity of purpose; are thoroughly well organized under leaders of whose ability and generalship, at least, there can be no question at all. And, while it may be true, as claimed by those who have made a study of the subject,

¹ Perhaps the words (S. John xx) "They beckoned to their partners who were in the other ship" might be taken as another instance of what is here alluded to

that the best remedy—from the State's point of view—against socialism and anarchism is "rightly-organized trades-unionism", a Christian, whether Catholic or Protestant, cannot well accept the statement without qualification. He would say, and justly, that "rightly organized" means organized on Christian principles, since that is the only "right" which he can, or is willing to recognize; that no other can hope to withstand the forces arrayed against lawful labour, no less than against Society.

It is this consciousness of unity of purpose which underlies all the efforts of socialism to eradicate patriotism and to establish "internationalism", as it is the fashion to call it; to break down all "artificial barriers" of political allegiance between the masses of one country and those of another. It is just one more "devil's mockery" of Catholicism, of that "fellowship of the Saints" which knows, "in Christ Jesus", neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, since we are all His brethren, and "every one members one of one another", even as the so-called Renaissance was "a devil's mockery of the New Birth".¹ It is a policy, proofs of which may be met with at every turn; it is only recently that I came across a fairly noteworthy instance of it, in the capital of the Dominion. It was in the form of a notice, to this effect:

"Workers of the world unite! You have nothing to lose but chains: and you have a world to gain!"

Leaving out the reference to more or less imaginary chains—except, of course, those of their own forging, *catenæ peccatorum*—this motto, it occurred to me, would serve, excellently well, for my purpose of indicating who are, or who should be, the Church's natural allies in her actual conflict with the forces which, during the year that has passed, have given such striking evidences of their numbers, their power, their ruthlessness, their world-wide influence and singleness of aim, none other, indeed, than the overthrow

¹ A saying of the late Father Alfred Young, C.S.P.

of civilization as it now exists. The motto, thus adapted, would run thus:

"Christians of the World, unite. You have nothing to lose; and you have a world to gain!"

"Nothing to lose." Is that not true, even should we be called upon "to lay down our lives for the brethren", even as Our Lord laid down His life for us? "A world to gain." Not for ourselves, but for Him. What else do we mean when we pray: "Thy Kingdom come"? And the means? Christian unity and singleness of aim, the only true "internationalism" because of His ordering "Who hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth"; an alliance, defensive and aggressive, of all followers and lovers of the Incarnate Son of God.

For that, after all, that, and nothing else, constitutes Christianity; belief in the Divinity and in the Incarnation of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who though He be, as Saint Paul tells us, "God over all, Blessed for evermore", was yet "made of a Woman"; was "made Flesh, and dwelt among us." This, and this only, differentiates a real Christian from a merely nominal one; the belief and profession, of lips, heart, and life, that "Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh". There has never been, and never will be, any other Christianity possible.

If so, who are to be, or should be, the Church's allies in her latest warfare with the powers of evil, "old foes with new faces" to reverse Kingsley's saying? Those, surely, who make this profession of faith; be they Orientals, or "orthodox Protestants". To some, perhaps to many, even the mere suggestion of such an alliance with "heretics and schismatics" may seem little less than disloyalty to Catholic truth, if not worse. It will be my endeavour, in what here follows, to justify what I have suggested; to shew reasons for such an alliance, with orthodox Protestantism especially, since it is in the western world, chiefly, the world dominated,

religiously, not less by Protestantism than by Catholicism, that the fight, against the newest enemies of both, must be waged.

In order, however, to arrive at such a justification, if, indeed, it be possible to do so, it will be necessary, in addition to what I have ventured to term the scriptural foreshadowings of such an alliance, to go back to what, I think, was surely among the strangest revelations ever made by God to one of His servants. Most of us know something, at least, all we need, or care to know, about the moral condition of paganism at the time when Christianity first began to be preached. But even though, as Kingsley says,¹ "the sins of the heathen world are utterly indescribable," such as no man would dare to write, much less to print, as they were; the City of Corinth was a byword throughout such a world, for all that was vilest and most unspeakable. Yet it was concerning Corinth, of all places, that God said to Saint Paul: "I have much people in this city." (Acts xviii, 10.)

It has been the "tradition" of Catholics, almost, one might say, an article of faith, ever since the great religious revolt of the sixteenth century, to regard Protestantism as a "pestilent heresy", as spiritually, and irredeemably evil, out of which no good can possibly come, and for which no excuse can be possibly made. Strictly speaking, Protestantism, in so far as it has departed from the Catholic Faith, is a heresy, but that it contains elements of truth, truths out of proportion, wrongly insisted on, if you will, cannot be denied. It is this measure of truth, honestly believed, and faithfully practised by men and women in good faith, to whom Protestantism is, simply, "the gospel," that accounts, religiously speaking, both for its continuance and for the lives of those who know no other form or measure of the truth of God. Protestants are, therefore, "material" heretics, but not "formal"; heretics in fact, but not in intention.

¹ Preface to "Hypatia."

But it no less is the "tradition" of Protestants, a tradition extending over the same period, to hold "Popery" in utter abhorrence, as a soul-tyranny, a tissue of lies and deceit, a veritable system of idolatry, the religion of anti-Christ. It requires a certain amount of courage, therefore, to plead with the traditionalist, on either side, that there may be good in the other, if only "in spite of his errors". Still more does it need courage to urge that, in face of a common and united foe, such traditions should be set on one side, if not forgotten, and that the followers of the One Lord, whatever differences may otherwise keep them apart, should fight, side by side, under His banner, against His enemies.

In considering even the possibility of such an alliance we must, necessarily, take into account the causes, which, in the first instance, led to our "unhappy divisions", and assume, honestly, whatever responsibility may be found to rest upon us, as Catholics. It takes two, as the old saying has it, to make a quarrel; but it is no less true that the older and better informed participant must bear the greater blame.

Who, then, apart from human perversity, the wiles of Satan and the inscrutable mysteries of Divine Providence, is really responsible for the existence and continuance of heresy? Charles Kingsley, from whose "Hypatia" I have already quoted, puts a noteworthy answer to this question into the mouth of one of his characters, the Abbot Philamon. "On the Catholic Church alone," he makes him say "lies the blame of all heresy and unbelief: for if she were for one day that which she ought to be, the world would be converted before nightfall." Is not this witness only the simple and shameful truth? Had the Church retained her first Pentecostal fervour would the "Reformation" have been possible, as, perhaps, in a very real sense, it was necessary? If every individual Catholic, man or woman, in a parish, a city, or a diocese, lived, but for one day, as God and the Church mean us to live, "worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called," how many Protestants and unbelievers in that neighbourhood would remain unconverted? Of

any who should so remain the Church in that parish, city, or diocese might truly say, with Her Lord; "now they have no excuse for their sin." And if "Popery" be all that Protestants believe it to be, why has it continued to exist, after nearly four centuries, in countries enjoying "the light of the pure Gospel," unless it be, as they must themselves admit, that their lives have not been in accordance with the faith they profess to hold.

But the excuse, so far as Protestants and unbelievers are concerned, does unfortunately exist everywhere, in the lives of nominal Catholics, and never, probably, to so great an extent as at the present day, save and except during the period immediately preceding the so-called Reformation. For that spiritual revolt, with all its eternal and incalculable consequences, the Church, in a very real sense, was, and remains, responsible; in and by the lives of her clergy, her laity, and even of her very Popes. For the continued existence of Protestantism, as for the socialism and anarchism which are the logical outcome of the first rejection of her Divine authority in spirituals, the Church, with the exceptions already indicated, must, once more, be held accountable. Not, thank God! in the measure and degree of the sixteenth century, since Protestantism is now an inherited condition rather than a revolt, but, none the less, by reason of every "lax Catholic" who, forgetful of his calling, his duties, and his privileges, has become an enemy of the cross of Christ.

If then the Church, in this sense, and in this way, is responsible for the existence of Protestantism, what is to be our attitude under the stress of modern conditions towards those who, through no fault, and by no conscious desire of their own, are outside her fold, yet actually, by virtue of being baptized Christians, belong to her care and to her jurisdiction? Hitherto, it has been to regard them as enemies, as formal heretics to be converted, or else avoided in spirituals; and we have spent our energies in controversies concerning matters which, however important in themselves, are as

nothing—I write under correction—compared with the vital issue: Christianity or Socialism: God's Kingdom, or the devil's. This attitude of antagonism, as already shewn, has been, and still is, common to them and to us. We have attached more importance, seemingly, to the validity or invalidity of Anglican orders than to Anglican orthodoxy; they, on their part, have made more of our loyalty to Christ's Vicar than of our loyalty to Christ Himself. Surely, in the face of a common enemy, that supreme loyalty, in so far as it is shared by them and by us, should come first.

It is, therefore, along the lines of a reconsideration of our traditional points of difference, their relegation to the place that properly belongs to them, that we find it necessary to take into account not only the "essentials" that divide us, but the misunderstandings which are not less, but, rather, more responsible for keeping us apart. We shall have to consider, also, the essentials whereon we are agreed, which spring from, and centre in, our common belief in the Divinity, and in the Incarnation, of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The chief of these is, evidently, that loving devotion to His Person, which necessarily follows any real belief in Him. Yet it is, strangely enough, on this very point, on that which should be the strongest bond of union between "all them who love Our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," that the first misunderstanding, and, consequently, the first cause of division, arises.

It is difficult, if not impossible, for any Catholic not a convert, or who has not made a study of Protestant devotional literature, to realize the intense, loving devotion to the Person of Our Blessed Lord which fills the lives of so many pious persons outside the visible fold of the Church. The norm of Catholic sanctity is so clear and distinct, that any other is inconceivable; we reason from our own experience, and conclude that since it is in conformity with the laws governing the spiritual life, as revealed in the Saints, all other experience must, necessarily, be at variance with them. It is just as difficult, in a word, for a Catholic to believe

in Protestant piety and sanctity—which are not, after all, Protestant, but Christian, however imperfect—as it must have been, speaking with all reverence, for Saint Paul to realize that God had “much people” in such a city as Corinth. Nor is it less difficult for a devout Protestant to realize that “Papists” have any true devotion to Our Blessed Lord; the cause being the same, in either case; a misunderstanding of the terms used by the other, but chiefly on the Protestant side.

Admitting, then, what is readily capable of proof, that orthodox Protestants have a very real and fervent devotion to the Person of Our Lord Jesus Christ; that, possessing this essential, at least, the greatest, indeed, of all sanctity, there are real saints among them, “souls naturally Catholic,” because Christlike, living, daily and hourly, in the conscious love and presence of The Beloved; how shall we account for their traditional belief that “Papists,” with some few and rare exceptions,¹ have no such devotion? It arises largely, I think, from the ambiguous use of the one word: “worship.”

In the “authorized” or King James version of the English Bible, “worship” is used, indiscriminately, for the adoration (*latria*) which Catholics render to God and to God only, and for the reverence (*worship, dulia*) which they pay to Our Lady and to the Saints; just as *adorare* (to adore) is used, in the Vulgate, in either sense.² When, therefore, Protestants assert that Catholics “worship the Saints”, they mean that we pay to creatures that adoration which is the sole due of the Creator, and a false conception, amounting to a charge of polytheism, arises out of a statement which, properly understood, is not only true, but as innocent as the expression that a man “worships” his wife, or a mother her children. The real meaning of the word, as indicating a measure of worth, or of worthiness, has been lost sight of, though it is still em-

¹ S. Bernard, S. Francis, Thomas à Kempis, Fenelon, Father Faber, and Cardinal Newman, are typical “Papist” lovers of Our Blessed Lord, in the eyes of devout Protestants.

² *Adorate scabellum eius*, “Worship (at) His footstool.” Of another of the servants who owed a hundred pence is said that he “adored” his creditor (*adoravit*: i.e. besought or implored him).

ployed in such official phrases as "the most worshipful the lord mayor of London."

So, again, the Catholic doctrine and practice of the Invocation of Saints, based, as it is, on intercessory prayer, and on the reverence due to spiritual "worshipfulness", has possibly on account of this very ambiguity, come to be hopelessly misunderstood and misinterpreted. Protestants, in common with all Christians, believe in the efficacy of intercessory prayer. But they have come to believe, or to act as if they believed that both the prayer and its efficacy stops short at the veil, just when, according to all the laws of spiritual life, it should become most efficacious because freed from all taint of selfishness, or possibility of variance with the Will of God. Plainly speaking, they are afraid to believe that those divided from us by "the narrow stream of death", to quote one of their own hymns, even though, "One family we dwell in Him", still plead in the Father's House for those who have not yet made the passage of the Jordan. To what cause are we to attribute a timidity fraught with so untold a spiritual loss, so contrary to all the instincts and longings of the human heart, to all that, naturally,—if one may say so,—a Christian would most lovingly and gladly hold to? There can be but one answer; the doctrine savours of "Popery". They are convinced that Catholics not only ask the intercession of the Saints, but, literally, pay them divine honours, have set them up "in the place of Christ", and have thereby derogated from His glory.

The misunderstanding, arising, as has been said, out of the one word, "worship", as signifying "adoration", was doubtless deliberately fostered by the more violent "reformers" of the sixteenth century, as the records of the period plainly shew. But in those whom they misled, as in the inheritors of their separation from the One Fold, a pure zeal for God's honour has been perverted into abhorrence of a practice which, as they understand it, has absolutely no existence. Let them be once convinced that the invocation of Our Blessed Lady and of those chosen friends

and servants of God, whom we call Saints, differs only in degree, but not in kind, from our "invocation" of any holy person on earth; that is, from asking "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man", or woman, which their own Bible tells them, "availeth much"; that we attribute, to Our Lady and the Saints, neither omniscience nor omnipotence, but only that knowledge of the family concerns—to speak with all reverence—which all those "within the veil" enjoy in God, and only that power of intercession which those who are beyond sin and self-will must surely possess with the Beloved "First-Born among many brethren"; and one cause of misunderstanding, at least, will have been removed from between them and us.

There is Scriptural proof, and to spare, as to this power of merit and of intercession; let it suffice to refer to a few passages only. "My servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept." That is the intercessory prayer of a saint on earth. "Remember Abraham, Thy servant." That is the pleading of the merits of a saint passed beyond the veil that we call death: not dead, "for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Why should it be lawful for a Protestant to say, with the Psalmist, "For Thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of Thine anointed"; and unlawful for a Catholic to say: "For Thy Mother Mary's sake, turn not away my prayer"? Has David's prayer more efficacy than hers or will He listen more readily to the "man after His own heart" than to the Mother who fed Him at her Virgin breast? What does He say, Himself? "If any man minister unto Me, him will My Father honour." Of how much honour, then, shall She be deemed worthy of whom it is written that of Her "was born Jesus, Who is called Christ," that He was "subject" to Her; who ministered to Him, from the stable at Bethlehem to the Tomb by Calvary, as only a Mother can? Venerable Bede, indeed, in his homily on the text, "Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it," gives us the true secret of Her blessedness. She was more blessed,

he says, in keeping The Word in Her heart, by loving Him, than by bearing Him in her womb, when He "was made Flesh and dwelt amongst us." Is not this another misunderstanding that might well be cleared away, if possible? This, and the reason why, with Saint Elizabeth, we call Her "Mother of Our Lord", of Emmanuel, God with us; with the Church "Mother of God", in witness to the reality of His Incarnation.

But it is in relation to the supreme and ineffable pledge and memory of His Love, the Blessed Sacrament, that the most fatal of all our misunderstandings with our separated brethren has arisen. Here, again, we cannot doubt that the misunderstanding was, in the beginning, deliberately fostered by those who, having lost faith themselves in the Divine Mystery, were determined to draw the "unlearned and ignorant" into their net of error, on the plea of teaching them a "purer faith". Such wilful perversion of truth was, of course, wholly without excuse in its originators, who, trained in the terminology of Catholic theology and philosophy, maliciously misused and misinterpreted definitions, the real meaning and import of which they understood perfectly. The error, however, once propounded, found ready acceptance among populations accustomed to take the priests' word, on matters of doctrine, as final and not to be questioned, obedience to constituted authority, spiritual and secular, being a marked characteristic of the Feudalism which was so soon to disappear. The same zeal for God's honour which had been misdirected against a false conception of Catholic devotion to the Saints, was now misdirected against belief in the simple and literal truth of Our Lord's own words. It was only too easy, that is to say, to misinterpret such terms as "real" and "natural", in relation to the mode of Our Lord's Presence in the Blessed Sacrament, in such a manner as to give an impression of Catholic doctrine as wide of the truth as the difference

¹ Lib. IV. Cap. 49 in Luc. 11.

between worship and adoration. All the distinctions, so carefully laid down by Saint Thomas, between a sacramental mode of presence and one in conformity with the ordinary laws of a natural body, of time and of space, were scornfully swept aside as "scholastic speculations", and a "purer gospel" preached instead.

Yet, I have no hesitation in saying, from what it has been my privilege to know of God's "much people" in the City of Confusion, that the real heart-belief, difficult and vague of expression—tending to mysticism rather than to definition—of devout non-Catholics, in regard to this supreme manifestation of Divine Love and condescension, approaches very nearly, in essence, if not in terms, to the heart-belief of pious Catholics.¹ For under and beyond all dogmatic definitions which our faith accepts, our belief in our consciousness of the Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Eucharist is a spiritual reality, a part of the soul's life—"My Beloved is mine, and I am His"—a consciousness not to be expressed in words. It is, if I may say so, the difference between the teaching of Saint Thomas and his *Lauda Sion*, or his *Adoro Te*; between love and reason. It is on this point, more than on any other, that devout souls, both within and without the visible communion of the Church, must surely desire to be at peace and in mutual charity and comprehension.

As the last of the misunderstandings to be taken into account, and as closely connected with the foregoing, we have that authority of the Church's ministers, commonly spoken of, among Protestants, as "priestcraft", and as "tyranny over men's consciences". Once more, we have to charge the leaders of the religious revolt in the sixteenth century with wilful falsification of Catholic teaching, with deliberate misrepresentation of a divinely-constituted authority the

¹ See, for instance, the hymn of the Presbyterian, Dr. H. Bonar, beginning "Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face; Here may I touch and handle things unseen." Many other instances might be given

restraints of which, on their pride, their passions, and their self-will, they were determined to shake off, on the plea of "Christian liberty". And naturally, since these heresiarchs were, almost without exception, priests and religious who had renounced their former faith from motives of which God alone has the right to judge; of which He has already judged, and rendered to each of them, "according to his works." The misunderstanding, however, as it commonly exists, arises from a mistaken and wholly arbitrary distinction between the authority of the Church, and that of the God-enlightened conscience of every faithful Christian. It was Cardinal Manning,¹ I think, who pointed out that a Catholic is not priest-ridden, but conscience-ridden, and that every consistent Protestant, who obeys the dictates of his conscience, is in precisely the same condition. The Protestant conscience invokes the infallible authority of the Written Word; the Catholic, that of the living, infallible Church, "the pillar and ground of the truth"; but, behind and above Bible and Church is the same Supreme Authority, God Himself. It is only because the Bible is His Word, only because the voice of the Church is His Voice—"he that heareth you, heareth Me"—that either has any claim to Christian obedience. Once more, if this were clearly understood, a further cause of division would be removed from between those who alike submit to one and the same authority—that of God. It is not man we obey, when we accept the teaching or instruction of a priest, but God, even as they listen to Him; it is not to man that we confess our sins, but to God, in the person of His minister.

Yet, when all explanations have been made, and all misunderstandings, so far as may be, cleared away between "men of goodwill," there remain the questions, both of the possibility, and of the lawfulness of such a Christian "internationalism" as I have here ventured to suggest for consideration. Our differences with our separated brethren arise, as has been

¹ In his *Religio Viatoria*.

shewn, largely from their misinterpretation of certain Catholic terms and practices, but it must not be forgotten that those practices, even in their lawful forms, and rightly defined, have certain devotional and spiritual effects, certain influences on the life of the soul, which differentiate the religious Catholic from the religious Protestant. We have to decide, therefore, to what extent that differentiation is real and typical, and to what extent only apparent. Also, whether, with all loyalty to our faith and to our traditions, there is any way in which we may lawfully emphasize the essential oneness of the life which has its source, its growth, its nourishment, and its consummation, in Christ.

We have seen that one, if not the only reason why Catholic devotion to Our Blessed Lady and to the Saints has been construed by Protestants into a derogation from the honour due to God alone, is the confusion of ideas arising out of the ambiguous use of the word "worship". But, if we really desire to prove our contention that the Mother of God and the Saints do not, as our separated brethren honestly believe, "take the place of Christ" with us, how are we to convince them? Not, certainly, by any lessening or verbal minimizing of our devotion to the Saints, and to their Queen and ours, but by a fuller realization that, as Saint Augustine says, "they truly honour the Martyrs who imitate the Martyrs." In what, after all, did their sanctity consist, save only in their likeness to their Lord; and who was more like Him than She who, for thirty years, lived in daily, hourly intercourse with Him, as a Mother with Her Son? We have Scriptural warrant, moreover, for setting up the Saints as models to be copied. "Be ye followers (imitators) of me," wrote Saint Paul, to his disciples, "as I am of Christ." And again: "Mark them who walk even as you have us for a model." In proportion, therefore, as we have true devotion to Our Lady and the Saints, we shall learn, and, better still, share in the secret of their sanctity, likeness to their Lord and ours. Then, and

¹ Serm. 47 de Sanctis.

then only, shall we convince our separated brethren that our devotion to the Saints leads us, not away from Christ, but ever nearer and nearer to Him, since it was devotion to Him that made the Saints to be Saints. Then shall the reproach that is fallen upon us be taken away, and, on a common devotion to One and the same Lord, be founded that unity of all who love Him which alone can withstand the unity existing among the followers of Satan.

This, of the essence, and the spiritual efficacy of true devotion will, of course, hold even more true in relation to the Blessed Sacrament, the means, of Our Dear Lord's own choosing, not only of making us like Himself, which is much, but of making us one with Himself, "members of His Body," which is infinitely more. It is this grace of union, chiefly, and before all else, that He bestows, on those who love Him, in Holy Communion. It is a grace immeasurably easier of attainment by us, to whom He has granted, of His unmerited favour, a valid ministry and valid sacraments, than by our brethren; yet only the Last Day will reveal how much more nearly and more fully many of them have attained to this oneness with Christ Our Lord than many of us, in spite of the longer and the harder way they must needs traverse, to reach this consummation of all the soul's love and desire; that He should dwell in us, and we in Him "as wax melted into wax," to use Saint John Chrysostom's wonderful simile. It will, surely, be on the realization of our common attainment, by the path He marks out for each of us, to this grace of union with Him, that we may hope to base a real fellowship of all whom He loves, and who love Him.

The alliance, then, seems to be possible, without any disloyalty, on either side, to that which each holds as truth, even as two or more nations have often united in resistance to a common foe, each remaining true and loyal to its own king and government, forgetting, it may be, old grievances and causes of difference, in the stress of the more immediate duty of self-preservation against powerful oppression.

There is no need, that is to say, even were it lawful, to minimize the real differences that exist between us, but there is urgent need of defining, clearly, what those differences are, and not to be kept apart, unnecessarily and even fatally, by misunderstandings and mere ambiguities, in the presence of a united, organized, and aggressive enemy, eager to take advantage of our disunion, and to exaggerate it, in order to weaken the forces of Christianity.

But, even if possible, is such an alliance, between the True Church and "heretics", a lawful one? Once more, I desire to profess, in all sincerity, my entire and unreserved submission, on this as on all other matters, to the divine authority of the Church. But, apart from those Scriptural foreshadowings, to which I must again allude; apart from the fact that the present sharp distinction between Christ's Kingdom and Satan's, is, except for the times of persecution, literally without parallel in the history of Christendom, there is the vital fact that the struggle is not merely between the Church and the forces of evil, but between those forces and all that can, in any real sense, be called Christianity. In proportion, therefore, as Protestants and Catholics can agree to unite on the basis of a common love and devotion to the Divine, Incarnate Son of God, in so far will each gain strength from the alliance. If it is not to the interest of the various denominations of Protestants to see the greatest body of professing Christians, the Catholic Church, oppressed or overcome—if that were possible—by socialism, it is equally true that the Church, humanly speaking, would lose, incalculably, by the victory of socialism over Protestantism as a Christian religion. In a word, Christianity, whether Catholic or Protestant, has everything to gain by unity in, and for Christ, and everything to lose by division. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church, even as her Lord promised her; yet there is no reason why she should not accept the help of those who, in the primary essence of all true Christianity, are at one with her. That such an

alliance would lead, inevitably, to unity, to real oneness, who may doubt?

So far, we have dealt only with the external foes of Christianity. It may be well, however, before concluding, to say something regarding its secret enemies, since, in this case also, they are no less the foes of all true Christianity than they are of the Church. The conflict, here, to put it in as few words as possible, rages round the authenticity and divine authority of the Written Word of God, even as the open conflict rages round the Person and Divinity of the Living, Incarnate Word, God made Man.

Now, if there is one characteristic which, more than any other, is supposed to differentiate Protestantism from Catholicism, it is the attitude ascribed to each towards the Holy Scriptures. Protestantism claims, and is popularly held to be, the "religion of the Bible", Catholicism, the religion of tradition and of human authority. I say "supposed", deliberately, for, as there is abundant evidence to shew, the Church of the Fathers, of the Schoolmen, and of the Middle Ages, was, emphatically, the Church of the Bible. On her liturgy, her theology, her hymnology, on her whole literature, the Latin Bible, according to the witness of a non-Catholic scholar, Dr. Maitland, in his "Dark Ages," has left an impress only to be compared with that made by the English Bible on English-speaking Protestantism. Indeed, if the comparison halts, in any measure, it is because the impress is deeper, and more evident to those who know how to find it, in the former case than in the latter. There is a sense, in which it is as literally true to say that the Western, or Latin Church is as truly the work of the Vulgate as it is to say that Anglicanism is the work of the Book of Common Prayer; such work meaning, of course, the formation and nourishment of a distinct type of spiritual life and character. More, it is no less true that to those unfamiliar with the phraseology of the Vulgate—to refer, once again, to Dr. Maitland,—the Church's language, whether devotional or

literary, is almost incomprehensible; its beauties lost or hidden. It is a cipher without a key.

How, then, it may be asked, has it come about that, since the sixteenth century, the Catholic Church which, on the evidence of Blessed Thomas More, and many others,¹ encouraged and allowed the use of the vernacular Scriptures by the laity, has apparently withheld, or, at all events, seemed to discourage their use? The answer, so far as the charge has any basis, which we do not admit, would, I think, be found in the two words: "the Reformation." That is to say that a liberty conceded to the laity of a united Christendom would, for a time at least, be guarded, if not actually restricted—both being within the Church's right, who can withhold inopportune good as well as forbid evil—when, in whole countries, it degenerated into a licence which appalled the more moderate reformers themselves; and the Bible, which Christendom owed to the Church, was wrested into a weapon against her. It was inevitable, indeed, that, under the circumstances then prevailing, not only should the Church find herself compelled temporarily to restrict the general use of the vernacular Scriptures, which the printing press might, otherwise, have made available for every educated Catholic, rich or poor, but that the faithful themselves, seeing the blasphemous misuse and perversion of Scripture, that was going on around them should come to regard vernacular translations as suspect, or even heretical. Being moreover, for the most part, unable to read the Vulgate, they naturally lost, in a very short while, their ancient, reverent familiarity with the sacred text. In a word, the conditions of war and rebellion are wholly different to those of peace, and the Catholic remnant, in England and Scotland, fighting for very existence, clung less tenaciously than they might have done to matters not absolutely essential to salvation. And it is no small part of the penalty incurred by the Church, through her respon-

¹ See *Encycl. Brit. Art.*: "English Bible;" and Gairdner "*Lollardy and Engl. Refn.*:" Vol. II: "The English Bible."

sibility for the reformation, that both the scriptural and the liturgical spirit should have, seemingly, departed from her faithful laity.

But if the Church, prior to the religious revolt of the sixteenth century, was—as she still is—in this sense, the Church of the Latin Bible, it is no less true that, in a very real sense, English-speaking Protestantism is the fruit of the English Bible, which, as has been truly said, “has been the sole spiritual as it has been the sole literary food of countless millions of English speaking people.” The secular literature, as well as the devotional, of the countries commonly called Anglo-Saxon had been coloured and influenced by the “authorized” (King James) version of Holy Scripture to an extent, as was said just now, only to be compared with the influence of the Vulgate on Latin Christianity, that is on the later Roman Empire, and on European Christendom for the thousand years that the Church’s language was practically the sole medium of civilized intercourse between the learned of one country and those of another. It is Froude, no lover of the Church, or of Catholicism, who, in his *Life and Letters of Erasmus*, speaks of mediæval Europe as a literary republic, with one common language, Latin; and who deplores England’s severance from this community, on “religious” grounds. That, briefly, is what European civilization owes to the Church. That, also, is why the influence of the English Bible has been said to have been less than that of the Vulgate.

Yet it was, unquestionably, the misfortune of the Catholic remnant, in England and on the Continent, that it should have been impossible for them, at the time, to accept a translation which, made by professed heretics, and with more than a suspicion of heretical bias, was, nevertheless, as it still remains, the crowning glory of English literature; the flowering, as Carlyle says of Shakespeare, of all the antecedent centuries of Catholic civilization.¹ Whether it

¹ “The Hero as Poet.”

is now possible, as Dr. Barry has ventured to suggest,¹ for them to make this "well of English undefiled" their own, at this late day, it is, as he says, for the constituted authorities to decide. I would only presume to suggest, for my part, that, since it is the aim of the secret foes of Christianity to make void the authenticity and Divine authority of the Bible, and since it is to our interest, no less than to that of orthodox Protestants—much more, if anything,—to maintain that authenticity and authority, a common Bible, a common Scriptural phraseology would unquestionably be a source of strength to them and to us.

The alliance, therefore, between the Church and those of her separated children who still cling to the Person and Divinity of her Incarnate Lord and theirs, in the face of His enemies; who still hold, in spite of all the insidious assaults of modernism and of the self styled higher critics, to the authenticity and Divine authority of His written Word; must, evidently, if it is to exist at all, rest on these two essentials of all true Christianity. It will be our duty, in that case, to make the most of what is common to them and to us, the oneness, namely, of the Christ-life in all who are His; theirs, to put out of sight, as far as possible, the doctrines and practices wherein we differ from them.

It is in this respect, as I honestly believe, that a common Bible would be of untold service in promoting a better understanding. And, in urging on English-speaking Catholics a closer study and more reverent familiarity with the Sacred Text, I am only urging a return to the spirit and practice of the Saints, the Doctors, and devout laity of the Church, prior to that loss of so many of her children which she has never ceased to deplore and to suffer from. Moreover, since it is only by increased devotion to the Saints that we can hope to attain, in any measure, to their likeness to Our Blessed Lord, it is, surely, only our wisdom to follow the path they have marked out for us. It is the Bible which,

¹ "Literary Aspects of Old Testament." Dublin Review, July, 1909.

in a very real sense, made them saints. Their hearts, their minds, their memories, were saturated, if one may say so, with those Holy Scriptures which were "able to make them wise unto salvation". It is shewn in their prayers, their hymns, their meditations; the Breviary and the Missal are, literally, made up of Scriptural phrases, images, and allusions; is there any better nourishment of our souls that we may presume to devise?

In the revival of the Scriptural and liturgical spirit—they are one and the same, the spirit of the Church and of the Saints—moreover, we shall find not merely the means of increasing our devotion to Our Blessed Lady and to the Saints, and, most of all, to Our Dear Lord, but an ever clearer recognition of our fellowship, in Him, and by Him, with all those "who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity". Then, and then only, may we hope for an alliance which, in Him, shall lead to the "oneness" of all His, for which He prayed, on the night of His Most Bitter Passion, "that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." Then, and then only, shall we, together with all those who believe in His Divinity and His Incarnation, go forth, under His Banner of the Cross, "conquering and to conquer" all His foes and ours, whether open or secret; till the kingdoms of this world shall indeed have become "the Kingdom of Our God and of His Christ." ADVENIAT REGNUM TUUM.

FRANCIS W. GREY

